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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-SEVENTH MEETING (PART II) (closed-resumption 3)

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Saturday, 23 February 1991, at 10.30 a.m.

President:	Mr. MUMBENGEGWI	(Zimbabwe)
Members:	Austria	Mr. HOHENFELLNER
	Belgium	Mr. NOTERDAEME
	China	Mr. LI Daoyu
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. ANET
	Cuba	Mr. ALARCON de QUESADA
	Ecuador	Mr. AYALA LASSO
	France	Mr. BLANC
	India	Mr. GHAREKHAN
	Romania	Mr. MUNTEANU
	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	Mr. VORONTSOV
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir David HANNAY
	United States of America	Mr. PICKERING
	Yemen	Mr. AL-ASHTAL
	Zaire	Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA

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READEX FICHE

The meeting was resumed at 11.25 a.m. on Saturday, 23 February 1991.

The PRESIDENT: I should like to draw the attention of members of the Council to the following documents: S/22234, letter dated 15 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; S/22236, letter dated 14 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Mauritania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; S/22237, letter dated 14 February 1991 from the representatives of Algeria, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; S/22238, letter dated 15 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; S/22239, letter dated 17 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; S/22240, letter dated 17 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Mauritania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; S/22241, letter dated 19 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; S/22242 and S/22244, letters dated 19 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; S/22245, letter dated 20 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; S/22247, letter dated 20 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; S/22248, letter dated 20 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; S/22251, letter dated 20 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the

(The President)

Security Council; S/22252, letter dated 20 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; S/22254, letter dated 22 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; S/22256, letter dated 21 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and S/22257, letter dated 22 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

Mr. VORONTSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): On instructions from the leadership of the Soviet Union, we asked for the resumption of this meeting of the Security Council to report to the Council on our work over the past few days with the special representative of Iraq, Mr. Tariq Aziz, who has visited the Soviet Union in response to the plan we proposed on 18 February. In the course of difficult and lengthy talks we succeeded in making more specific the readiness expressed by the Iraqi leadership to withdraw their troops from Kuwait on the basis of the decisions of the Security Council.

Specifically, the matter stands as follows: Iraq agrees to comply with Security Council resolution 660 (1990), that is immediately and unconditionally to withdraw all its troops from Kuwait to the positions they occupied on 1 August 1990. The withdrawal of troops would begin the day after a cease-fire and a halt to all land, sea and air hostilities. The withdrawal of troops would be carried out over 21 days, and troops would be withdrawn from Kuwait City in the course of the first four days. Immediately after the completion of the withdrawal of troops from Kuwait, the reasons for the adoption of other Security Council resolutions would have lapsed, and those resolutions would thus cease to be in force. All military prisoners of war would be released and repatriated in the course of three days following a cease-fire and cessation of hostilities. Confirmation, monitoring and observance of the cease-fire and the withdrawal of troops would be carried out by observers and/or peace-keeping forces to be determined by the Security Council.

It is our belief that in those circumstances it has become possible, for the present, to achieve optimal results. This not only gives us reason to hope for a peaceful settlement of the conflict but also raises real prospects for such an outcome.

(Mr. Vorontsov, USSR)

Of course, the proposal worked out in Moscow can be further improved, but it represents the best we have been able to achieve thus far.

The Iraqi leadership has accepted that proposal; in that connection we have received an official statement from President Saddam Hussein.

Moreover, in the statement he made in Moscow on 23 February Mr. Tariq Aziz in effect responded positively to the United States statement.

We do not think the results we have achieved so far represent our achievement alone. The possibility that an end could be called to the war today, thereby saving perhaps thousands of lives, stems primarily from the striking unanimity displayed throughout the conflict by the international community and the Security Council. For the first time in the history of international relations since the Second World War, we have been able through our joint efforts to halt aggression and provide a lesson to any future potential aggressor.

Given the current situation, we think it important to continue efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement to the crisis as early as possible. To that end, all relevant Security Council resolutions should be complied with and all existing proposals should be integrated into the settlement.

Mr. PICKERING (United States of America): I too want to provide the Council with an interim report on the approach which the members of the coalition, including, of course, the United States have been taking on the question of a resolution of the issue before the Council. In that regard I want to express our thanks and appreciation for the work the Soviet Union has been doing and for the interim report provided to us by the Soviet representative.

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

As members of the Council will know, the United States, on behalf of the members of the coalition, presented yesterday a document which outlines our views about how and in what way this issue should move to a rapid settlement. I should like, if I may now, to quote extensively from that document and then, in a few minutes, to provide some commentary on the statement which our Soviet colleague has presented.

Yesterday we said that the Soviet announcement represents a serious and useful effort which is appreciated. But in our view major obstacles remain. The coalition for many months has sought a peaceful resolution of the crisis in keeping with the United Nations resolutions. As President Bush has pointed out to President Gorbachev, the steps the Iraqis are considering would constitute a conditional withdrawal and would also prevent the full implementation of relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

Also, there is no indication that Iraq is still prepared to withdraw immediately, in accordance with the terms of Security Council resolution 660 (1990). Full compliance with the Security Council resolutions has been a consistent and necessary demand of the international community, as we all well know here in the Council. The world must make sure that Iraq has in fact renounced its claim to Kuwait and accepted all relevant Security Council resolutions.

Indeed, it is only here in the Security Council that we could agree to lift sanctions against Iraq, and the world needs to be assured in concrete terms of Iraq's peaceful intentions before such action can be taken. In a situation where sanctions have been lifted, Saddam Hussein could simply revert to using his oil resources once again, not to provide for the well-being of his people but instead to rearm, with some intention, perhaps, of repeating his aggression in the future.

So, in a final effort to obtain Iraqi compliance with the will of the international community, the United States, after consulting with the Government of Kuwait and its other coalition partners, declares that a ground campaign will not be initiated against Iraqi forces if, prior to noon, Saturday, 23 February, New York time, Iraq publicly accepts the following terms and authoritatively communicates that acceptance to the United Nations:

First, Iraq must begin large-scale withdrawal from Kuwait by noon, New York time, Saturday, 23 February. Iraq must complete military withdrawal from Kuwait in one week. Given the fact that Iraq invaded and occupied Kuwait in a matter of just hours, anything longer than this from the initiation of withdrawal would not meet with resolution 660's requirement of immediacy. Within the first 48 hours, Iraq must remove all of its forces from Kuwait City and allow for the prompt return of the legitimate Government of Kuwait. It must withdraw from all prepared defenses along the Saudi-Kuwait and Saudi-Iraq borders, from Bubiyan and Warba Islands, and from Kuwait's Rumaila oil-field within the one week specified above.

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

Iraq must return all its forces to their positions of 1 August in accordance with resolution 660 (1990).

In cooperation with the International Red Cross, Iraq must release all prisoners of war and third-country civilians being held against their will, and return the remains of killed and deceased servicemen. This action must commence immediately with the initiation of the withdrawal and be completed within 48 hours.

Iraq must remove all explosives and booby traps, including those on Kuwaiti oil installations, and designate Iraqi military liaison officers to work with Kuwaiti and other coalition forces on the operational details related to Iraq's withdrawal, to include the provision of all data on the location and nature of any land or sea mines.

Iraq must cease combat-aircraft flights over Iraq and Kuwait, except for transport aircraft carrying troops out of Kuwait, and allow coalition aircraft exclusive control over and use of all Kuwaiti airspace. It must cease all destructive actions against Kuwaiti citizens and property, and release all Kuwaiti detainees.

The United States and its coalition partners reiterate that their forces will not attack retreating Iraqi forces and, further, will exercise restraint so long as withdrawal proceeds in accordance with the above guidelines and there are no attacks on other countries. Any breach of these terms would bring an instant and sharp response from coalition forces, in accordance with Security Council resolution 678 (1990).

In addition, I want to inform the members of the Council that our proposal is there. It remains on the table, on its own conditions, to be accepted at any time. We hope it will be accepted as soon as possible. This position of the coalition therefore stands.

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

I have heard with interest the report of our colleague from the Soviet Union. I must say that we are pleased with the progress that has been made, even though we feel that the proposal as set forth fails in two important circumstances to meet the tests that are set forth in resolution 660 (1990) itself. One of those circumstances is that of immediacy, the question of timing. The issue of timing, I believe, can best be made clear by careful examination of the proposal which I have just read out, which in our view meets the circumstances of timing as required in the initial resolution.

The second point that I believe is important is the issue which appears in the fourth portion of the Soviet proposal provided to us today in the interim report. That is the question of conditions. It is difficult for us to see how an unconditional proposal - a proposal without conditions - can be so conditioned, particularly in respect of the idea of declaring that Security Council resolutions somehow cease to exist, are null and void or without effect. Obviously, such a step is unacceptable to us on a number of grounds.

First and foremost, there has clearly been no compliance up to this point with Security Council resolution 660 (1990). Thus, without compliance with that resolution - and, for example, the requirement of resolution 662 (1990), that Iraq rescind its purported annexation of Kuwait, which the Council declares to be null and void - it would be most inappropriate and unwise, in our view, to move to declare that such a step by the Council cease to exist and thereby to enshrine the unilateral Iraqi action purporting to carry out that annexation.

Not only has there been no response to Security Council resolutions that speak to Iraq's responsibility for its illegal acts, including breaches of the Geneva Convention of 1949; there have been continuing acts of wanton destruction within the last 24 hours, as we have seen if we all continue to watch the television

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

screens, as I know members do. The enormous fires that are now consuming Kuwaiti oil fields and installations are, in our view, continuing such actions.

In addition, with respect to resolution 660 (1990), it is not clear in the mind of my Government that the proposal which we have heard read out actually involves paragraph 3 of that resolution. Members will recall that paragraph 3, which calls for a beginning of negotiations between Iraq and Kuwait to resolve their differences with the help of others, including members of the Arab League, was put into the resolution by the members of the Council with a clear sense of the importance of that step.

There are, in short, actions called for by these resolutions that remain to be taken. There are legal obligations that flow directly from and by operation of international law which remain to be satisfied. Whether, after all resolutions have been complied with by Iraq, it would make sense to engage the Council in what would become for us the thoroughly novel practice of declaring a resolution as ceasing to be in force, as null and void or without further effect, is a question that we can all examine in due course. It is not a practice, however, in the view of my Government, that should be taken on lightly. Aside from the overtones of rewriting history, there is the question of the effect of any such action taken on the network of legal consequences which flow from and which will continue to flow from the decisions of the Council on the situation created by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

The days of the invasion may be numbered. We certainly believe this to be the case. But the consequences would not and could not end so soon. There is, moreover, the important and salient need to restore international peace and security to the region in accord with the strictures of resolution 678 (1990) and

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

with the implications which are clear in the appropriate paragraphs of resolution 674 (1990). We must not dismantle at the stroke of a pen what the Council has built since 2 August until we have reached agreement on how to restore peace and security to the area.

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

I am delighted to hear at this meeting indications from our Soviet colleague that the Foreign Minister of Iraq either intends to respond or has responded positively to the points I have read out today. I should be delighted to have any clarification of this that can be made.

It is my understanding as well that the President of Iraq plans to speak on television in the next few moments. We shall obviously look forward with hope to hearing what he has to say in response to the proposals we have put forward.

We also continue to hope that Iraq will rapidly come to its senses and will accept the proposals that have been put before it for ending its aggression.

Mr. LI Daoyu (China) (interpretation from Chinese): As announced by the Soviet Union, Iraq has made a positive response to the peaceful initiative of the Soviet Union by indicating its willingness to withdraw from Kuwait unconditionally. This is a major change, in a positive direction, and is a good beginning. We welcome this announcement.

This war which has lasted for more than a month has inflicted huge losses of human life and property on the innocent population of the Gulf region. If the war escalates further, the Gulf region and the people of that region as well as other countries concerned will face even greater suffering. We strongly call on the parties concerned in the conflict to demonstrate their goodwill for a peaceful solution, not to miss this opportunity to end the war and bring about peace at an early date, and to make further efforts to seek a solution that could immediately lead to a peaceful settlement of this crisis.

At such a crucial moment, the Security Council should fulfil its responsibilities by considering and adopting an appropriate plan for the peaceful settlement of the Gulf crisis, thus playing its role in the restoration and preservation of peace and security in that region.

Mr. GHAREKHAN (India): As the Secretary-General said a few days ago, these are testing times for our Organization. The test has perhaps never been as severe or acute as it is today. As my colleague from China, Ambassador Li Daoyu, has just stated, this is the time for the Security Council to discharge its responsibility and to work for peace.

I should like at the outset to thank the representatives of the Soviet Union and the United States for the reports they have presented to us this morning. Of course, my delegation would have been even happier if these reports had been submitted to the Security Council before today. That would have given us more time. But it seems to my delegation that we have not really run out of time. We have time - of course, not to infinity, but enough time to try and see what can be done.

I should like to express my Government's very deep and sincere appreciation for the enormous efforts which President Gorbachev has personally exerted to find a peaceful answer to the crisis in the Gulf region.

At the opening meeting of the Indian Parliament, yesterday, both Houses adopted a unanimous resolution calling upon the Security Council to continue to make all efforts to find a peaceful solution and expressing appreciation to President Gorbachev for his efforts. This meeting of the Houses of the Indian Parliament took place soon after the first set of proposals were announced in Moscow.

My delegation takes note of three or four points in particular in the statement made by Ambassador Vorontsov. First, after presenting the six points of the proposal, he said that they can be improved, that they are not the final word. I think that Ambassador Pickering referred to them as an interim report. The second point Ambassador Vorontsov made was that it is important for the Security

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

Council to continue to make efforts. His third point was that it is necessary - and I think should be feasible - to prepare an integrated solution on the basis of existing proposals. His fourth point was that Iraq has accepted the Soviet proposals - and Mr. Tariq Aziz seems to have made a statement in Moscow today responding positively to the United States statement of yesterday.

I should like to thank Ambassador Pickering also for officially seizing the Security Council of the United States proposals.

There are, of course, differences between the two sets of proposals, but there are also similarities. Ambassador Pickering mentioned two points with which his country and the members of the alliance have particular difficulty: the question of immediacy, and the fourth point in the Soviet peace plan. Of course it would be naive to minimize the differences. The differences are there; they are real. But there are also similarities; there are also points of agreement. Some differences may be not so difficult to bridge and some differences may be a bit more difficult to bridge.

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

Under these circumstances it seems to my delegation that what the Ambassador of China just said is important and very relevant. He said that the Security Council should fulfil its responsibility by adopting a plan of action of its own; I understand that to be what my colleague from China was suggesting.

The situation today is so serious, with thousands of lives at stake, that we feel the Security Council must remain in continuous session, if necessary, to try to sort out a plan of action, as proposed by the representative of China.

We not only would urge the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States to try to work out the differences between their plans of action, but would also like the Council as a whole, and in particular all the non-permanent members, to discharge their responsibility, the mandate entrusted to them - that is, to us, including my country - by the General Assembly as a whole.

If it is not possible, or if it becomes too difficult, for the principal authors of the two plans to resolve their differences, perhaps it is incumbent upon all the 10 non-permanent members at this time to sit together and see what we can do. My delegation would therefore like to suggest to its colleagues, especially the non-permanent members, that we meet, that we sit together and find some way out of what appears to be an impasse. It may not turn out to be an impasse, but if it is, it must not be allowed to remain an impasse. The situation is far too grave for us just to leave everything to others.

I think the representative of the Soviet Union also said that his Government would like the Security Council to consider the different sets of proposals and to produce an integrated plan of action.

Sir David HANNAY (United Kingdom): I should like to begin by thanking the representative of the Soviet Union for the progress report he has just given us on the contacts his Government has had with the Government of Iraq. I should also like to express my Government's thanks for the very great efforts that the Government of the Soviet Union and President Gorbachev personally have made in recent days and to recognize the very considerable changes which they have managed to bring about in the position of the Government of Iraq, which started last week, as we all know, with a position which was a very long way away from the one it has now endorsed.

My Government stands firmly by the offer that was set out on behalf of a number of allies of Kuwait by President Bush yesterday. I would just draw to the attention of the representative of India that that is not simply a United States offer. In any case, we regard it as fair and reasonable, and we stand by it.

I do not want to comment in great detail on the six points referred to us by the representative of the Soviet Union which his Government has worked out with the Iraqi Foreign Minister and which the Iraqi Foreign Minister now apparently - I must say "apparently", because we still do not have what I would call an authoritative endorsement of it by the Government of Iraq at the highest level - accepts.

But I would just make the point that although he stated that Iraq now accepts resolution 660 (1990), and in particular the requirement for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait, the content of some of the other points is in effect a contradiction of that proposition, so there is still, I fear, an inbuilt contradiction in those points.

I will leave aside comments on the time table, which in my Government's view should stand as put forward by the allies of Kuwait in their statement yesterday, and simply concentrate on the fourth point, where I think the Security Council as a whole must look with some care. This fourth point, which relates to the status of

(Sir David Hannay, United Kingdom)

the Security Council's own resolutions after an Iraqi withdrawal, seems to us to be fundamentally flawed. It is wrong, I think, in fact to state that the Security Council resolutions will lose their force with an Iraqi withdrawal; purely formally, one must say that only the Security Council itself can make that judgement.

But, more than that, it is, frankly, not the case that the reasons for adopting a number of those provisions will have been removed. It is simply not the case that provisions relating to the damage or the breaches of human rights that have been committed by Iraq will be removed by the removal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait. But whether or not it is factually accurate as a presentation of policy, I am afraid that point is really quite unacceptable. One has only to look at some of the provisions of the Security Council resolutions which would, if this point were accepted, become invalid on an Iraqi withdrawal to understand why that is so and why my Government's view is as it is.

Resolution 661 (1990), for example, is a very firm basis for the establishment of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Kuwait. It is really an essential part of any withdrawal that Iraq recognize that. It is also the basis on which Kuwait can hope to repossess some of the goods that have been pillaged from it, including all the aircraft belonging to Kuwait Airways.

Resolution 662 (1990) is the basis for the declaration that the annexation of Kuwait is null and void. We all know there is an Iraqi internal law that states that Kuwait is the nineteenth province of Iraq, part of it, of course, being the province of Basrah. Removal of the "null and void" provisions of resolution 662 (1990) would leave the Iraqi law standing, and Iraq could go on arguing this issue for decades. That is not acceptable in circumstances in which Iraq has invaded its neighbour and committed this act of aggression.

(Sir David Hannay, United Kingdom)

Resolution 664 (1990) contains provisions about the holding of nationals against their will. As we all know, there are many thousands of Kuwaiti citizens held in Iraq against their will, and their future must be assured. It cannot just be left to the mercy of the Government of Iraq, which has so grievously maltreated them so far.

(Sir David Hannay, United Kingdom)

Then, resolution 674 (1990) provides for the basis for compensation for damage caused by Iraq - and every day there is more of it - and for the handling of breaches of the Geneva Convention. As I said before, these matters cannot be wiped from the slate by an Iraqi withdrawal.

Finally, in resolution 678 (1990) itself there is a commitment by the Security Council to the peace and security of the region. That must surely be maintained; that is the guideline for all our future action. If you remove that, you merely risk going back in that region to the extremely unstable, extremely insecure situation that prevailed on 1 August. And that cannot be in the interest of any of the countries in that region.

Those are a number of points I wished to make, not in a spirit of criticism or hostility, to the Soviet Union, whose efforts, as I say, have been Herculean in the last 10 days. But it does, I think, demonstrate how we are still a long way from getting the Government of Iraq to accept what it will have to accept if there is to be a peaceful solution.

I had hoped, and I still hope, that the representative of the Government of Iraq at this table will be able to tell us that his Government has accepted the offer that was made by the allies yesterday. That, of course, is the simple and straightforward way to bring this dispute to a peaceful solution at the earliest possible moment.

Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria): I should like first of all to thank the representatives of the USSR and the United States of America for their interim reports submitted to the Council at this meeting. The statements made by a spokesman of President Gorbachev in Moscow on 21 February and, in particular, 22 February, on the results of the talks between the Soviet leadership and the Foreign Minister of Iraq, as confirmed and elaborated today by the representative

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

of the USSR, were a positive signal. They have given reasons for hope that the full implementation of previous Security Council resolutions is now possible and that further military operations may not be necessary.

Also, there are still some uncertainties and open questions as to the modalities of implementation in conformity with those resolutions. These statements and, in particular, that of 22 February, do go a long way indeed. They form the basis for further serious consideration of the remaining questions.

The members of the Security Council should play a major role in this context, bearing in mind that the very objective of our efforts is a political solution based on the full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular the liberation of Kuwait and the restoration of its legitimate Government.

In my statement to the Security Council of 14 February, I declared:

"... even at this late hour, despite the military action already undertaken, political and diplomatic efforts still have their place and should, indeed, be intensified. The loss of human lives and the material destruction that have already occurred, and the even greater losses in the future in the event that hostilities continue, and especially if they escalate, make the search for ways and means of bringing these hostilities to an early end a moral imperative." (supra, p. 91)

Today more than ever before, we have a historic opportunity for such efforts based on the results of Moscow. I appeal to all to use it.

Mr. ALARCON DE QUESADA (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): At the outset my delegation would like to pay tribute to President Gorbachev, who in the last few days, and perhaps even the last few weeks, has devoted time, energy and dedication to trying to find a peaceful solution of this conflict. We also hail

(Mr. Alarcon de Quesada, Cuba)

the positive outcome of his efforts, which are clearly reflected in the information Ambassador Vorontsov was good enough to give us a few moments ago.

My delegation would like to associate itself with the ideas put forward earlier by other colleagues, particularly the representatives of China and India.

It seems to us that, as a result of the positive outcome of the Soviet efforts, agreements have been reached that, as Ambassador Vorontsov has informed us, have been accepted by the Government of Iraq at the highest level. This implies a fundamental obligation for this Council to get down to work immediately to determine the specific steps and actions it should take to make it possible for this plan for a peaceful settlement of the conflict to be carried out as speedily as possible, and in the most appropriate way.

We believe there should be no doubt whatsoever that the Security Council alone has the responsibility to determine the terms of a peaceful settlement, under which international peace and security must be guaranteed.

At this time I do not wish to dwell on details or specific points on some issues raised by some of our colleagues. I wish only to recall that for more than six months a clear international consensus has been reflected in this Council on the need to ensure full implementation of resolution 660 (1990), which has obviously been the basis of any subsequent action by the Security Council.

The relationship between compliance with that resolution and compliance with other resolutions agreed upon by the Council later could be the subject of an analysis among us, but I am not convinced that this is the time to engage in such a process, when other urgent tasks deserve the Council's immediate attention. I merely wish to draw the attention of my colleagues to the first resolution adopted after resolution 660 (1990) - resolution 661 (1990), in which this Council decided to establish comprehensive economic sanctions against Iraq.

(Mr. Alarcon de Quesada, Cuba)

At that time the Security Council decided the following: in paragraph 1 of its resolution 661 (1991), to determine that Iraq had so far failed to comply with paragraph 2 of resolution 660 (1991); and in paragraph 2, to decide, as a consequence, "to take the following measures", which represent the economic sanctions.

The direct cause and effect relationship between economic sanctions as decided upon by the Council and Iraq's failure to comply with the terms of paragraph 2 of resolution 660 (1991) - that is to say, fully to withdraw from Kuwait - is quite obvious and has been stated explicitly by the Council.

In any event, my delegation believes that we could discuss all this, as we must also discuss the definition of what one colleague called a peace plan, or some action to make it possible to facilitate compliance with paragraph 2 of resolution 660 (1991) - a goal sought by the Security Council throughout.

We appreciate the statement made by Ambassador Pickering, containing the proposal made - as indicated in the final paragraph - on behalf of the United States and its partners in the coalition. We take note with appreciation the fact that it has been submitted formally to the Council.

It has been said outside this Chamber that the intent of this proposal was to set a deadline for Iraq and to humiliate that country. I do not know whether that is the precise intention of the sponsors, but the fact that it has been presented to the Council and that 20 minutes have already elapsed after the noon deadline leads me to hope that there is no intention whatsoever to regard it in the same fashion as has been announced outside this Council.

We believe that the Council should act in the manner suggested by our colleague from India. My delegation is fully prepared to work in the manner he has suggested, that is, in continuous session. We also believe that he has made a very

(Mr. Alarcon de Quesada, Cuba)

useful suggestion with regard to the role that might be played by the non-permanent members. He recalled a very important thing: that we the non-permanent members have been elected by the General Assembly and that we have a special responsibility to try to interpret the anxiety and concerns of all the Members of the United Nations with respect to this problem.

In this spirit, and with this readiness, my delegation trusts that under your wise leadership, Mr. President, the Security Council will make the best possible use of all the time available to it, not because it must take action in the face of some possible threats or deadlines given to the Council, but because we are indeed dealing with a very grave problem involving the lives of thousands of people and because we have the obligation to try to bring about the speediest possible solution to this problem.

Mr. BLANC (France) (interpretation from French): Over the grace period established by the Security Council before 15 January, France spared no effort to promote a peaceful settlement of the crisis. Unfortunately, Iraq refused to comply with the Security Council resolutions.

Recently President Gorbachev took the initiative to make a last attempt to prevail upon Iraq to accept the will of the international community. We commend the praiseworthy efforts of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Regrettably, the results achieved remain inadequate. As the members of the Security Council know, a last appeal has been made by the members of the coalition setting forth the conditions in keeping with the resolutions of the Security Council that must be accepted by Iraq. We hope that President Saddam Hussein will respond positively to that appeal.

Mr. NOTERDAEME (Belgium) (interpretation from French): First of all I should like to thank our Soviet colleague, Ambassador Vorontsov, for the very important information he has just given to us. My Government had an opportunity

(Mr. Noterdaeme, Belgium)

yesterday to express its full appreciation for President Gorbachev's extraordinary diplomatic effort.

I also listened with keen interest to the statement of our colleague Ambassador Pickering.

I shall not at this stage comment on the two statements made here - one by the Soviet Union and the other on behalf of the members of the coalition. I merely wish to make one comment. What bothers me the most and makes me a bit perplexed is the fourth point in the Soviet proposal providing for the annulment of all the other Council resolutions once withdrawal had taken place. I really have a great deal of difficulty with this and, if possible, I should like to ask our colleague Ambassador Vorontsov to provide some explanation as to the purpose of this provision.

Mr. AYALA LASSO (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of Ecuador, may I first express our thanks for the report our colleague Ambassador Vorontsov was good enough to give us at this formal meeting.

(Mr. Ayala Lasso, Ecuador)

I believe that his statement not only sheds light on the dynamic efforts the Soviet Union has been making to facilitate the reaching of an agreement that will bring an end to the war in the Gulf as soon as possible but also affords the Security Council an opportunity to become cognizant in a formal meeting of this commendable initiative and to consider it substantively. At least, that is my interpretation of the Soviet Union's request to hold this meeting, since a purely informative exercise - undoubtedly useful in itself - would in the present circumstances be insufficient.

I should also like to express my appreciation to my friend Ambassador Pickering for the information he has given us on the views of the United States of America and the other countries assisting Kuwait with regard to the Soviet plan and on the elements that could bring about an immediate solution to the crisis.

I have noted with great satisfaction the fact that there is a gradually increasing number of significant points of convergence between the two positions, and I am hopeful that that trend might continue. The differences between the two ways of envisaging a solution are both objective and considerable. I believe, however, that the presentation of the two reports has enabled us to see clearly that there is still room for additional progress in diminishing these differences so as to arrive at a plan eventually acceptable to Iraq.

Let me be very clear: my country has stated that the solution to this problem must begin with Iraq's compliance with the resolutions of the Security Council. Ecuador regards that as a fundamental and key point. Along with that, however, there is another point that we regard as essential, and that is that we give peace the greatest possible chance through negotiations. It is at this point in time that we must step up diplomatic efforts and the Council's actions in an attempt to achieve that peace. I agree with the statement of our friend Ambassador Gharekhan,

(Mr. Ayala Lasso, Ecuador)

in which he referred not only to the Council's obligation to consider matters dealing with international peace and security but also to our common desire to participate fully in the efforts being made to put an end to the war.

Those are the two issues I wanted to mention at this stage of our work in connection with this item. Obviously, I would be ready and willing to work non-stop, should that prove necessary, and in due course to give my views on all the points of both of the plans we are considering.

Mr. AL-ASHTAL (Yemen)(interpretation from Arabic): The Security Council is meeting today at a very important juncture in the Gulf crisis. It is for that reason that we are participating in the discussion, notwithstanding our objection to the convening of a private meeting. We believe that the Council's meetings should be public. The entire world is focused on the action the Council will take. We hope that the present privacy will be ended as soon as possible.

From the military viewpoint we are on the threshold of a very important development, one that could lead to the expansion of military battles if a large-scale ground war is initiated. A ground war will have incalculable results and its expansion might result in the use of weapons of mass destruction. In any event, the losses in human life and destruction of property will be enormous. All of this must be taken into consideration by the Council at this vital moment.

From the political viewpoint, there has been a very important development: Iraq has at last agreed to implement the resolutions of the Security Council, particularly resolution 660 (1990). Iraq has announced, through its Foreign Minister, that it will withdraw from Kuwait in accordance with the provisions of resolution 660 (1990). In those circumstances matters must return to the Council, and we wonder whether any party, including the members of the coalition, has the right to escalate military action without returning to the Security Council itself.

(Mr. Al-Ashtal, Yemen)

We now have a great opportunity either to achieve peace or to wage war and cause vast destruction. The Security Council must therefore adopt a proper and necessary resolution which in the final analysis will restore peace and security to the region.

(Mr. Al-Ashtal, Yemen)

Today's meeting, therefore, is of special importance; at it, we must decide how to resolve this problem one way or another. In that connection, I thank the representative of the Soviet Union and the Soviet leadership, who have undertaken a very important effort to find a peaceful solution to the problem.

As members know, this process began on 15 February, when Iraq submitted a proposal for a peaceful solution to the problem. We discussed this question at another informal meeting, at which I said the Security Council had to probe Iraq on its proposals and on its acceptance of the Council's resolutions. I said at that time that the Council had to authorize one party, either the Secretary-General or the President of the Security Council, to represent it and to follow up on the Iraqi proposal.

When the Foreign Minister of Iraq was on his way to the Soviet Union we told the Council that we had to wait; we had to hear from the Soviet delegation about the talks that were to take place in Moscow and about their results. Today I want to thank the representative of the Soviet Union for the clear report he gave the Council on those talks and deliberations.

We now have before us what could be called a six-point peace plan. Iraq has publicly accepted that plan, that includes complete withdrawal in accordance with Security Council resolutions. Therefore, the Security Council must discuss this proposal and adopt the appropriate measures.

We also heard the report of the representative of the United States of America on the steps announced yesterday in Washington on behalf of the coalition forces. We thank Ambassador Pickering for his report on the steps announced yesterday.

At this critical stage the Security Council must discuss the various proposals put forward and reach a final decision. Here I wish to thank the representative of India, who has made a number of proposals relating in particular to what

(Mr. Al-Ashtal, Yemen)

non-permanent members of the Security Council can do. As members know, there are precedents for such action by non-permanent members of the Security Council.

The Security Council must continue its deliberations on this question in a manner the President considers appropriate with a view to finding a solution to this problem that is satisfactory and acceptable to the Council.

Mr. MUNTEANU (Romania): My delegation would like to join delegations that have expressed their appreciation of the efforts made by the Soviet Union to find a peaceful solution to the Persian Gulf conflict.

We have taken note of the fact that the very first element of the Soviet communication conveys to us the agreement by Iraq to implement resolution 660 (1990) without delay and without conditions. At the same time we cannot overlook the fact that major obstacles still remain. Full compliance with all the Security Council resolutions has been a consistent and necessary demand of the international community.

As I have already said before the Council, my country is strongly committed to morality and legality in all spheres of domestic and international life. It has made clear in all its statements on the item under consideration that a solution to the Persian Gulf conflict can be based only on all the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

In the light of that position of my country, my delegation considers that Iraq should authoritatively communicate to the United Nations its full and unconditional acceptance of all the Security Council's resolutions. It is necessary to have a statement from Iraq that would make it clear that that country has renounced its claim to Kuwait.

On the other hand, we agree with the interpretation given here by other members of the Council that the sanctions against Iraq can be lifted only by the Council itself. The question of declaring null and void a number of resolutions on

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

the situation between Iraq and Kuwait cannot be treated in an easy way. Such a nullification should not in any way be viewed as a precondition; that is unacceptable to my delegation. In fact, it needs very careful and responsible consideration.

What counts is to have solid guarantees that Iraq will not again violate the Charter of the United Nations and the basic principles of international law.

Like other delegations we are ready to pursue our efforts within the Security Council. Such efforts should lead to the strengthening of the solidarity of this body, to the full implementation of all resolutions on the situation between Iraq and Kuwait and to the restoration of peace and security in that area.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the Secretary-General, who wishes to make a statement.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I have listened with greatest care to the very important statements made by the representatives of the Soviet Union, the United States, China, India, the United Kingdom, Austria, Yemen, Cuba, France, Belgium, Ecuador and Romania, and would like to express my appreciation for the contributions they have made in the debate today.

The Security Council is meeting at a crucial hour - crucial to an unparalleled degree. I have been informed of the positions taken by all parties in the past 48 hours, and I have watched the progress made in the laudable diplomatic endeavours to bring this destructive conflict to a speedy end in consonance with the resolutions of the Security Council. Openings towards a cessation of the conflict have been clearly revealed in the past two days. It would be tragic in the extreme if the opportunities that have been created were now to be lost. I appeal most earnestly that this not be the case.

The United Nations - and, if I may add, its Secretary-General - are passing through a most trying and, in some respects, painful experience. Since the beginning of the crisis, there has been devastation on a vast scale. The consequences for a vital and strategically most important region of the world are still literally incalculable. We have the obligation to uphold the principles which prompted the Security Council's resolutions, and we have to respond to the supreme moral imperative of preventing further destruction of life. These two objectives should not be irreconcilable.

Our attitudes and decisions at this stage will carry a momentous significance for peace and for the trust of the peoples of the world, across all cultures and continents, in this Organization.

The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the representative of Kuwait, on whom I call.

Mr. ABULHASAN (Kuwait) (interpretation from Arabic): I should like at the outset to express our gratitude to our friend Mr. Yuli Vorontsov, the Permanent Representative of the Soviet Union, for his preliminary report, which included the outcome of negotiations with the Iraqi régime. In the wake of an appreciated effort made by President Gorbachev in the past few days, I should also like to extend my thanks and gratitude to my friend Mr. Thomas Pickering, Permanent Representative of the United States, for his report. I should like to say that my Government has been cooperating with Arab, Islamic and other friendly countries to compel Iraq to withdraw immediately and unconditionally from Kuwait in accordance with Security Council resolutions, particularly resolution 678 (1990) and has consulted extensively with them.

We agreed to the plan announced yesterday by President Bush and to the detailed programme that followed that communiqué. We believe that President Gorbachev has made significant progress since the first announcement. President Gorbachev's success to date does not, however, deal with all relevant Security Council resolutions. It addresses one paragraph of resolution 660 (1990) concerning the complete and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces to the positions they occupied on 1 August 1990. Regrettably, even that paragraph was not accepted completely by Iraq, which rejected its demand for an immediate withdrawal. Iraq requests the abrogation of all Security Council resolutions on the issue on the basis of its withdrawing troops from territories under its control, as if it were withdrawing them - from Basra, for instance. I mention this because the Iraqi National Assembly unanimously adopted legislation in August - of course, without any debate and by order of the Iraqi President - naming Kuwait as the nineteenth province of Iraq.

We have been informed that Iraq communicated its acceptance of President Gorbachev's proposal to the Soviet Government. Despite our great respect

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

for the Soviet Government, Iraq, as all members of the Council know, has perpetrated an aggression against Kuwait. When Iran was attempting to find a formula for the acceptance of resolution 598 (1987), Iraq insisted that the only acceptable way, which had to be imposed on Iran, was for that country to indicate its acceptance of resolution 598 (1987) through a letter from the Iranian President or Foreign Minister to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. We all know the efforts made by the Iranian representative to find an appropriate formula. However, Iraqi insistence was very clear that this was the only legal manner in which Security Council resolutions are accepted. It took almost a year, during which Iraqi aggression against Iran continued, creating countless victims.

But now we are facing an even more serious and dangerous situation than existed during our debate on Iran's acceptance of resolution 598 (1987). Our acceptance of the statement made yesterday in Moscow by the Iraqi Foreign Minister would freeze the situation for a certain period and create an even more dangerous situation in the future that would claim more lives and more damage to property, which would need to be reconstructed between now and some later aggression launched by Iraq against Kuwait.

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

In order for Iraq to end this situation, it must do the following:

First, it must inform the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in writing, that it accepts all the Security Council resolutions.

Secondly, it must embark immediately on the implementation of paragraph 2 of Security Council resolution 660 (1990), on withdrawal.

Thirdly, the legitimate authorities must be enabled to return immediately to Kuwait.

Fourthly, Iraq must implement all the other Security Council resolutions by agreeing to an exchange of prisoners of war of all nationalities, including Kuwaitis taken prisoner since 2 August. This must be done immediately after the cease-fire. Arrangements must be made for looking for the missing. We have lists of names and addresses of more than 8,000 prisoners of war and more than 20,000 missing - and this applies only to Kuwaitis. Iraq must also pay full reparations under Security Council resolution 674 (1990), not only to Kuwaitis but also to all third-party nationals.

Fifthly, the legislative authorities in Iraq must abrogate all legislation concerning the annexation of Kuwait and the consideration of Kuwait as the nineteenth province.

I believe that without those elements we should only be freezing the whole question and paving the way for another Iraqi aggression a few years from now. My Government calls upon the Security Council to demand that Iraq immediately cease the present escalation of its inhuman practices against the defenceless Kuwaiti people, to cease committing crimes against the Kuwaiti economy and environment by setting fire to Kuwaiti oil wells and installations, and to cease the destruction of what is left of the Kuwaiti social and economic infrastructure.

Yesterday I sent a letter to the Secretary-General in which I informed him of a serious development that had taken place yesterday. Defenceless Kuwaitis between

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

the ages of 15 and 50 were arrested as they were leaving Friday prayers at a mosque. For absolutely no reason, they were put into buses and transferred to Iraq. The only error committed by these innocent persons is that they are Kuwaitis. Iraq wants to use these innocent persons as a means of pressure in any upcoming negotiations. Iraq fears that these defenceless, innocent Kuwaitis will want to defend the soil of their country and will engage in the liberation of their country.

I have listened to the proposal of my dear friend the Ambassador of India. While I appreciate his interest in bringing about peace and averting any further destruction for Kuwait and Iraq, I say that we should concentrate on persuading Iraq that the only way the region can be free of destruction, the only way that Kuwait and Iraq can be free of destruction, is for all the Security Council resolutions to be accepted and not for certain paragraphs of one resolution to be selectively chosen, for the very-well-known reasons I have set forth clearly in my statement.

The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. MOUSSA (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): On instructions from the Government of Egypt, I wish to make the following statement.

I extend my thanks and appreciation to President Gorbachev for the efforts he has exerted so far to achieve a peaceful, immediate solution to the present problem, in accordance with the Security Council resolutions. Egypt regards the Soviet initiative as a step in the right direction - the immediate and unconditional withdrawal by the Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

The present contacts between Cairo and Moscow, at the highest level, as well as the contacts between Cairo and Washington, also at the highest level,

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

demonstrate the interest that Egypt takes, because of its responsibilities in the region, in the achievement of an immediate, peaceful solution to the present problem. From the very outset - that is, from 2 August 1990 - we called for a political solution to the problem, and we have continued to do so. Our appeals and political initiatives at the international, regional and Arab levels, have reflected that interest.

In the light of recent developments, the Government of Egypt wishes to make the following comments.

First, we must work quickly to find a peaceful solution to the problem, in order to save lives and the entire region.

Secondly, what is of utmost importance is immediate withdrawal - now, not tomorrow. The Iraqi leadership must understand the dimensions of the entire situation and the serious consequences of any intransigence or delay. The time we have lost so far has been the result of this intransigence and also of Iraq's failure to understand the whole situation.

Thirdly, the withdrawal must take place immediately in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Security Council resolutions, starting with resolution 660 (1990).

Fourthly, Security Council resolution 660 (1990) cannot be accepted only partially, and it cannot be accepted alone, by itself. Negotiations between Iraq and Kuwait, two independent and sovereign countries, must start immediately after the withdrawal, and there must be an official commitment by the Iraqi Government in that respect.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

Fifthly, the solution of the problem lies not in immediate withdrawal alone, but in Iraq's rescinding of the annexation of Kuwait. Iraq must do this publicly and officially.

We must also implement all the terms of the 12 resolutions adopted by the Security Council. Therefore, we find totally unacceptable the request to rescind those resolutions or to have them regarded as null and void immediately after withdrawal. The Security Council must implement those resolutions, not rescind them. It has a responsibility to guarantee their implementation. We cannot accept their being rescinded before their full implementation.

Sixthly, acceptance by Iraq must be official and documented and be communicated directly to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

There are two things I wish to say here. First, I wish to read out the following official statement from the Egyptian Foreign Ministry on the recent developments:

"In the light of the consultations that have taken place between Egypt, the brotherly Arab countries concerned and the other members of the coalition participating in the liberation of Kuwait, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Egypt declares that while we appreciate the good intentions of the Soviet Union in its initiative, that initiative is lacking in certain regards. It does not respond to the main points in the Security Council resolutions concerning the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, first and foremost of which is the call for the immediate withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait, without any procrastination or conditions and for the return of legitimacy to Kuwait. Hence we confirm once again our support for the call by the members of the coalition to Iraq to withdraw its forces immediately from Kuwait. Egypt also calls upon the Iraqi leadership to respond quickly to the communiqué by the

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

coalition, and it must end its intransigence. It must measure up to the responsibility and dimensions of the situation facing the Iraqi people, which is causing that people much suffering and much destruction."

Secondly, I wish to comment on the statement by my colleague from India that the 10 non-permanent members of the Council should discuss the situation. While we do not interfere in the request of one member to others, we should like to state very clearly that what should be done now is to call upon Iraq to withdraw its forces immediately and not to make formalistic attempts to procrastinate. Time is of the essence. Any effort now should be concentrated on calling upon Iraq to withdraw its forces and accept the Security Council resolutions without any conditions. There should be a call upon the Iraqi leadership to put aside any other conditions in the light of the serious situation in the region.

Efforts in this regard must be coordinated with the Arab countries concerned. The legitimate interests of the countries of the region should not be disregarded. We must co-ordinate and consult with those countries and we must call upon Iraq to withdraw its forces in accordance with the terms announced yesterday - that is, a withdrawal that must start this very day.

Mr. VORONTSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The Soviet delegation wishes to speak again in order to express its profound gratitude to all those who have spoken here of their high appreciation of the efforts of our country and those of President Gorbachev personally to bring about the earliest possible resolution of the Kuwait crisis, the immediate withdrawal of Iraq troops and the total restoration of the sovereignty and independence of the State of Kuwait.

I should like to take this opportunity also to say that we have listened attentively to the detailed points made by the representatives of the United

(Mr. Vorontsov, USSR)

States, the United Kingdom and Kuwait regarding concrete elements of the plan of action worked out in Moscow. In the course of our further work we shall be ready to answer the question raised by the representative of Belgium.

We believe that important work has already begun at this meeting with a view to the further formulation of the plan of action. The Soviet delegation supports the proposals that we should urgently continue work on the plan of action. We think that the main thing now is to produce an integrated solution of the crisis on the basis of the provisions worked out in Moscow and the proposals of the United States and other members of the coalition. We are ready to participate actively in this work, which of course is of the utmost urgency.

Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGAYA (Zaire) (interpretation from French): My delegation wishes first to express its gratitude to the representative of the Soviet Union, Ambassador Vorontsov, for the tireless efforts of President Gorbachev to bring about a peaceful settlement of the question relating to the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq.

My delegation has followed with interest the statements made by members of the coalition on the Soviet-Iraqi proposals. My delegation believes that at this stage the members of the Council should spare no effort to examine those proposals in depth with a view to identifying elements that it can use to implement fully its 12 resolutions on the question. To that end, the official statements by Ambassador Vorontsov, setting forth the peace plan, and by the Iraqi authorities, accepting the plan, should be made official documents of the Council.

However that may be, my delegation regrets the absence of Kuwait from the consultations in Moscow, since resolution 660 (1990) binds Iraq and Kuwait to carrying out negotiations after the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya, Zaire)

As to the proposal made by the representative of India, my delegation also believes that all members of the Council should, regardless, take part in all the Council's formal and informal work with a view to finding the most appropriate way to take the Soviet-Iraqi proposals into account.

Sir David HANNAY (United Kingdom): I am speaking again only because I understand the speaker's list has been exhausted.

For the past one hour and twenty minutes I have been hoping to hear a few words spoken by the representative of the Government of Iraq. Since he has not spoken, I have taken the floor again merely to say that I think our debate this morning would be greatly illuminated if we were to hear the views of that Government.

Many references have been made to what the Iraqi Government does or does not accept, whether it is or is not favourable to the views expressed by the countries cooperating with Kuwait, and what it is prepared to do.

I think our further work is going to be extraordinarily difficult without an indication of the views of the Government of Iraq. This is not a negotiation between the Governments cooperating with Kuwait and the Soviet Union. It is not a negotiation at all. But we do need to know the views of the Government of Iraq.

Now, of course the representative of the Government of Iraq has every right to stay silent. I am not trying to exert any unacceptable pressure. But I do think this opportunity has to be offered before we close our debate.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Iraq.

Mr. KADRAT (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): Iraq's position is very clear. It has informed the Soviet leadership in Moscow that we have accepted the Soviet peace initiative and agreed to all its points. We have said we can withdraw

(Mr. Kadrat, Iraq)

in conformity with all the provisions of resolution 660 (1990), in accordance with what has been announced by Mr. Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Foreign Minister, in Moscow. As our friend the Soviet Ambassador made clear a few minutes ago, we find it strange that other conditions and other questions have been put forward at this meeting.

The PRESIDENT: With the concurrence of the members of the Council, I shall suspend the meeting now. The time for its resumption will be communicated by the Secretariat.

The meeting was suspended at 1.25 p.m.